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Biodiesel Myths and

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Myth: Biodiesel is an experimental fuel and has not been thoroughly tested.

Fact: Biodiesel is one of the most thoroughly tested alternative fuels on the market. A number of independent studies have been completed with the results showing biodiesel performs similar to petroleum diesel while benefiting the environment and human health compared to diesel. That research includes studies performed by the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stanadyne Automotive Corp. (the largest diesel fuel injection equipment manufacturer in the U.S.), Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute, and Southwest Research Institute. Biodiesel is the first and only alternative fuel to have completed the rigorous Health Effects testing requirements of the Clean Air Act. Biodiesel has been proven to perform similarly to diesel in more 50 million successful road miles in virtually all types of diesel engines, countless off-road miles and countless marine hours. Currently more than 300 major fleets use the fuel.

Myth: Biodiesel does not perform as well as diesel.

Fact: One of the major advantages of biodiesel is the fact that it can be used in existing engines and fuel injection equipment with little impact to operating performance. Biodiesel has a higher cetane number than U.S. diesel fuel. In more than 50 million miles of in-field demonstrations, B20 showed similar fuel consumption, horsepower, torque, and haulage rates as conventional diesel fuel. Biodiesel also has superior lubricity and it has the highest BTU content of any alternative fuel (falling in the range between #1 and #2 diesel fuel).

Myth: Biodiesel doesn't perform well in cold weather.

Fact: Biodiesel will gel in very cold temperatures, just as the common #2 diesel does. Although pure biodiesel has a higher cloud point than #2 diesel fuel, typical blends of 20% biodiesel are managed with the same fuel management techniques as #2 diesel. Blends of 5% biodiesel and less have virtually no impact on cold flow.

Myth: Biodiesel causes filters to plug.

Fact: Biodiesel can be operated in any diesel engine with little or no modification to the engine or the fuel system. Pure biodiesel (B100) has a solvent effect, which may release deposits accumulated on tank walls and pipes from previous diesel fuel use. With high blends of biodiesel, the release of deposits may clog filters initially and precautions should be taken to replace fuel filters until the petroleum build-up is eliminated. This issue is less prevalent with B20 blends, and there is no evidence that lower-blend levels such as B2 have caused filters to plug.

Myth: A low-blend of biodiesel in diesel fuel will cost too much.

Fact: Using a 2% blend of biodiesel is estimated to increase the cost of diesel by 2 or 3 cents per gallon, including the fuel, transportation, storage and blending costs. Any increase in cost will be accompanied by an increase in diesel quality since low-blend levels of biodiesel greatly enhance the lubricity of diesel fuel.

Myth: Biodiesel causes degradation of engine gaskets and seals.